



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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SNP Memo #07-08-18

TO: Directors, Supervisors and Contact Persons, Addressed

FROM: Lynne Fellin, Acting Director
School Nutrition Programs 

DATE: January 8, 2008

SUBJECT: Resources to Identify and Reduce Trans Fatty Acids in Foods Purchased and Sold by the School Nutrition Programs

The 2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGA) provide key recommendations for the general population. Among those recommendations are food groups to encourage and nutrients of concern. Specifically, the DGA make the following recommendations with regard to fats:

- Consume less than 10 percent of calories from saturated fatty acids and less than 300 mg/day of cholesterol, and keep *trans* fatty acid consumption as low as possible.
- Keep total fat intake between 20 to 35 percent of calories, with most fats coming from sources of polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fatty acids, such as fish, nuts, and vegetable oils.
- Limit intake of fats and oils high in saturated and or *trans* fatty acids, and choose products low in such fats and oils.

The estimated average daily intake of *trans* fats in the United States is about 2.6 percent of total calories. Processed foods and oils provide approximately 80 percent of *trans* fats in the diet, compared to 20 percent that occur naturally from animal sources. The major dietary sources of *trans* fats, listed in decreasing order, are: cakes, cookies, crackers, pies, bread, animal products, margarine, fried potatoes, potato chips, corn chips, popcorn, and shortening¹.

It is recommended that school divisions identify the amount of *trans* fats in foods purchased for the school nutrition programs, with the intent of reducing and eventually

¹ Source: Adapted from *Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2005*, United States Department of Health and Human Services, United States Department of Agriculture, *Key Recommendations and Chapter 6, Fats*, 2005.
<http://www.health.gov/dietaryguidelines/>

eliminating products that contain *trans* fatty acids produced in the partial hydrogenation of vegetable oils. To assist school nutrition programs in working toward this goal, the Department of Education, Office of School Nutrition Programs, provides the following information and resources as attachments to this memo:

- Power Point presentation, *Trans Fats: What is the Big Deal?*, Dr. Becky Domokos-Bays and Robin Wallin, October 2007, SNA-VA Conference
- *Fat Facts*, North Dakota Department of Public Instruction
- Web Resources for Information on Trans Fats

The Web Resources will also be posted to the School Nutrition Program Web pages in the Resources section. As school divisions create bid specifications for the upcoming bid cycle, the reduction and elimination of *trans* fats should be addressed. Food manufacturers have made progress in recent years toward eliminating *trans* fats from many products. Since January 2006, manufacturers have been required to identify *trans* fats on the Nutrition Facts Label.

If you have questions or need additional information, please contact the specialist assigned to the division or me at (804) 225-2074.

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